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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fiftieth session

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-ninth session in October 1998, the Executive Committee adopted a decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 1999 (A/AC.96/911, paragraph 25) in which it set out the issues to be examined by the Standing Committee.

2. In accordance with Executive Committee Working Methods adopted at the forty-sixth session (A/AC.96/860, paragraph 32), the Standing Committee held three meetings over the past year: in February, June and September 1999, as well as an extraordinary meeting in December 1998. A planning meeting of Executive Committee members in December 1998 established the calendar of meetings and determined the distribution of the different agenda items (see Annex I). Members of the Executive Committee, in acknowledgment of the need for multi-year planning, also took note of the programme of work of the Standing Committee for the years 2000 and 2001 (Annex 1).

3. A detailed account of the work undertaken at each of the meetings of the Standing Committee is contained in the following reports: A/AC.96/912: *Report of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee (8 December 1998)*; A/AC.96/913: *Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (9-11 February 1999)*; A/AC.96/924: *Report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (28-30 June and 1 July 1999)*; A/AC.96/927: *Report of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (29-30 September 1999)*.

Issues covered by the Standing Committee in 1999

4. The work undertaken by the Standing Committee included a number of recurrent items. As foreseen in the Decision on Budget Structure and Governance (A/AC.96/860, paragraph 22(1)), in-depth reviews of UNHCR programmes and activities in different regions were conducted at each of the meetings, allowing the Standing Committee to oversee the evolution of General and Special Programmes in the areas concerned. Africa and Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East were reviewed in February; Europe, former Yugoslavia and the Americas in June; and Asia and the Pacific in September.

5. In addition, the Standing Committee considered at each of its meetings regular updates on overall programme and funding issues, through which it was kept abreast of the situation in terms of General and Special Programme budgets, funding, and allocations made from the various funds (programme reserve, emergency fund and voluntary repatriation fund). The Standing Committee in February also considered a proposal for a new UNHCR budget structure, the result of consultations with Members and Observers of the Standing Committee in 1998 and early 1999. In line with the decision of the Standing Committee taken in February on the standardization of UNHCR reporting (A/AC.96/913), it also reviewed a Global Report on UNHCR's activities in 1998 in June and a Mid-Year Progress Report on UNHCR activities in the first half of 1999 in September.

6. At its various meetings, the Standing Committee also reviewed programme/protection policy issues. In February it followed-up on issues arising from the plenary debate on the annual theme in 1998 and considered recent developments in UNHCR's involvement in reintegration, as well as the safety of humanitarian operations. In September, it reviewed UNHCR's efforts on behalf of refugee women and looked at UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response capacity and the economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries.

7. In accordance with Executive Committee Working Methods (A/AC.96/865, paragraph 32(d)), the June meeting of the Standing Committee focused particularly on questions of international protection. Two days were devoted to consideration of the Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/914), which focused on admission and asylum, groups with special protection needs, the protection of refugees caught in conflict situations, the search for durable solutions and global partnership for international protection. In addition, issues relating to detention and family protection were reviewed. Conclusions resulting from the Standing Committee's consideration of these protection issues are being submitted to the fiftieth session of the Executive Committee for adoption.

8. At each meeting of the Standing Committee, an oral report was provided on coordination issues within the United Nations system. This included information on developments with regard to the Humanitarian Segment of the Economic and Social Council, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

9. In terms of issues of management, finance, oversight and human resources, in February the Standing Committee examined the safety and security of staff, the standardization of reporting and a review of the evaluation function in UNHCR. In June it reviewed issues relating to programme and financial management, and was provided with an update on UNHCR's change management initiatives. In September, a revision to UNHCR Financial Rules was considered and an update was provided on the independent evaluation of UNHCR emergency preparedness and response capacity to the Kosovo refugee crisis.

10. In line with Executive Committee working methods, the Standing Committee undertook the selection of the annual theme for the fiftieth session of the Executive Committee during its two sessions in February and June, adopting the theme of "Strengthening Partnership to Ensure Protection, also in Relation to Security".

11. In addition, in September, the Standing Committee undertook a preliminary review of the budgetary and financial documentation being presented to the fiftieth session of the Executive Committee.

Standing Committee decisions

12. In accordance with the authority vested in it by the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee adopted a number of decisions on matters included in its programme of work. The texts of these decisions are annexed to the reports of the different Standing Committee meetings, as follows:

A/AC.96/912: *Report of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee (8 December 1999)*

- Decision on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee

A/AC.96/913: *Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (9-11 February 1999)*

- Decision on the Standardization of UNHCR Reporting

A/AC.96/924: *Report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (28-30 June and 1 July 1999)*

- Decision on the Structure of the Annual Programme Budget
- Decision on Annual Theme of the Fiftieth Session of the Executive Committee

A/AC.96/927: *Report of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (28-30 September 1999)*

- Decision on UNHCR Financial Rules

Plenary decisions: preparation of drafts by the Standing Committee

13. On the basis of discussions undertaken in the course of the year, and in accordance with the Executive Committee's working methods, the Standing Committee initiated the preparation of draft decisions and conclusions for submission to the fiftieth session of the Executive Committee. In a series of informal consultations under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, the following draft decisions and conclusions have been discussed;

- General Conclusion on International Protection (item 5[1])
- General Decision on Programme, Administrative and Financial Matters (item 5)
- Conclusion on the Follow-up to the CIS Conference (item 5)
- Decision on Programme of Work of the Standing Committee in 2000 (item 8)
- Decision on Government Observer Participation in 1999-2000 (item 8)
- Decision on the Provisional Agenda of the Fifty-first Session (item 9)

[1] Numbers refer to items on the agenda of the fiftieth session of the Executive Committee.

CALENDAR

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING
COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1999

	14th Meeting 9-11 February	15th Meeting 28-30 June and 1 July	16th Meeting 28-30 September
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING	• Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on: Africa and CASWANAME • UNHCR's New Budget Structure	• Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on: Europe and the former Yugoslavia, and the Americas • Global Report	• Annual Programme Budget, including addenda on programmes and funding and the Report of the ACABQ • Oral strategic presentation on Asia and the Pacific • Mid-Year Progress Report
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION*		• Note on International Protection • Detention • Family Protection Issues	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	• Follow-up to Annual Theme • Reintegration: Recent Developments • Safety of Humanitarian Operations, including Follow-up to the Secretary-General's Report on Africa		• Refugee Women • Progress Report on UNHCR's Emergency Preparedness and Response Capacity • Social and Economic Impact of Massive Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries, as well as Other Countries
COORDINATION	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)
GOVERNANCE	• Selection of Annual Theme for the Fiftieth Session of the Executive Committee	• Selection of Annual Theme for the Fiftieth Session of the Executive Committee	

* Under this item in June, the Standing Committee will be presented with a Progress Report on UNHCR Activities in the Field of Statelessness

	14th Meeting 9-11 February	15th Meeting 28-30 June and 1 July	16th Meeting 28-30 September
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES	• Safety and Security of Staff • Standardization of Reporting • Update on Evaluation	• Follow-up to the Report of the Board of Auditors • Update on Change Management	• Voluntary Funds Administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 1998 • UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Activities • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 1998 • Measures Taken or Proposed in Response to the Recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors • Revision of UNHCR Financial Rules • Progress report on the independent evaluation of UNHCR emergency preparedness and response capacity to the Kosovo refugee crisis

Fiftieth Session of the Executive Committee
4 - 8 October

CALENDAR

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING
COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR **2000**

10 December 1998

	17th Meeting January/February	**18th Meeting June/July**	**19th Meeting September/October**
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING	• Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on: Africa and CASWANAME • Statistics	• Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on: Europe and the former Yugoslavia, and the Americas • Global Report	• Overview of UNHCR Activities including addenda on expenditure; review of budgetary and post requirements; Report of the ACABQ; Donor Contributions • Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on Asia and the Pacific • Mid-Year Progress Report
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION		• Note on International Protection • Two protection specific items to be decided upon**	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	• Follow-up to Annual Theme • Reintegration: Recent Developments; Elaboration of Guidelines • Refugee Children • Elderly Persons		• Environmental Issues • Spontaneous Repatriation • Local Integration
COORDINATION	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report) • UNHCR Lead Agency Role	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)

	17th Meeting January/February	18th Meeting June/July	19th Meeting September/October
GOVERNANCE	• Selection of Annual Theme for the Fifty-first Session of the Executive Committee	• Selection of Annual Theme for the Fifty-first Session of the Executive Committee	
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES	• Safety and Security of Staff	• Follow-up to the Report of the Board of Auditors	• Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 1999 • UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Plan and Activities • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 1999 • Measures Taken or Proposed in Response to the Recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors

Fifty-first Session of the Executive Committee
October

CALENDAR

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING
COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2001

	20th Meeting January/February	21st Meeting June/July	22nd Meeting September/October
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING	• Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on: Africa and CASWANAME	• Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on: Europe and the former Yugoslavia, and the Americas • Global Report	• Overview of UNHCR Activities including addenda on expenditure; review of budgetary and post requirements; Report of the ACABQ; Donor Contributions • Update on Programmes and Funding; including an oral strategic presentation on Asia and the Pacific • Mid-Year Progress Report
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION		• Note on International Protection • Two protection specific items to be decided upon	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	• Follow-up to Annual Theme • Refugee Women		• Progress Report on UNHCR's Emergency Preparedness and Response Capacity
COORDINATION	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on Coordination Issues, including ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment and IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)
GOVERNANCE	• Selection of Annual Theme for the Fifty-second Session of the Executive Committee	• Selection of Annual Theme for the Fifty-second Session of the Executive Committee	

	17th Meeting January/February	18th Meeting June/July	19th Meeting September/October
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES	• Safety and Security of Staff	• Follow-up to the Report of the Board of Auditors	• Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2000 • UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Plans and Activities • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2000 • Measures Taken or Proposed in Response to the Recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors

Fifty-second Session of the Executive Committee October

STANDING COMMITTEE DOCUMENTATION ISSUED DURING 1999

Extraordinary Meeting (8 December 1999)

EC/49/SC/CRP.1	Review of Non-Governemental Organization (NGO) participation in the work of the Executive Committee and its standing committee

14th Meeting (9-11 February)

EC/49/SC/CRP.2	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/49/SC/CRP.3	Draft Report of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee (8 December 1998)
EC/49/SC/CRP.4	Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 1998 and 1999
EC/49/SC/CRP.5	Consultations on UNHCR's Budget Structure
EC/49/SC/CRP.6	Reintegration: A Progress Report
EC/49/SC/CRP.7	Progress Report on the Consultations on the Standardization of UNHCR Reporting
EC/49/SC/CRP.8 and Add.1	Enhancement of the Evaluation Function in UNHCR
EC/49/SC/CRP.9	Standing Commitee Work Programme for 1999
EC/49/SC/INF.1	Follow-up to the Annual Theme of the Forty-ninth Session of the Executive Committee
EC/49/SC/INF.2	The Security, and Civilian and Humanitarian Character of Refugee Camps and Settlements
EC/49/SC/INF.3	Safety and Security of Staff

15th Meeting (28 June-1 July)

EC/49/SC/CRP.10	Draft Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (9-11 February 1999)
EC/49/SC/CRP.11	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/49/SC/CRP.12	Note on International Protection
EC/49/SC/CRP.13	Detention of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees: The Framework, the Problem and Recommended Practice
EC/49/SC/CRP.14	Family Protection Issues
EC/49/SC/CRP.15	Progress Report on UNHCR Activities in the Field of Statelessness

EC/49/SC/CRP.16	Update on Programme and Funding Projection for 1999
EC/49/SC/CRP.17	ACABQ Report on UNHCR's Proposed Budget Structure
EC/49/SC/CRP.18	Audit Follow-up: Financial Management and Programme Management
EC/49/SC/CRP.19	Update on the Change Management Process

16th meeting (28-30 September 1999)

EC/49/SC/CRP.20	Draft Report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/49/SC/CRP.21	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/49/SC/CRP.22	Refugee Women and a Gender Perspective Approach
EC/49/SC/CRP.23	UNHCR's Emergency Preparedness and Response Capacity
EC/49/SC/CRP.24	Social and Economic Impact of Massive Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries, as well as other Countries: Addressing the Gaps
EC/49/SC/CRP.25	Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds Administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees